

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE,
AND LISTING OF ALL CLAIMS WITH PROPER IDENTIFIERS**

1.-10 (Canceled)

11. (New) An airbag construction for protecting vehicle occupants in a motor-driven vehicle, comprising:
- an airbag module including a housing and an airbag retained in the housing and connected to a gas pressure source,
 - an interior paneling covering the airbag housing, the interior paneling provided with a weakened zone,
 - at least one flap retaining the airbag in folded position, said flap connected with the interior paneling by a connecting element, wherein upon deployment of the airbag, pressure exerted by the airbag causes the flap to open and the interior paneling to rupture into pieces along the weakened zone, such that the connecting element attached to the flap and the interior paneling is able to pull the pieces of the interior paneling away from a deployment path of the airbag, wherein the module is arranged in a retaining device such that a structural space is formed laterally between the retaining device and the module, said space is for receiving the flap and ruptured pieces when the airbag is deployed.
12. (New) The airbag as claimed in claim 11, wherein the connecting element is a slack tensile cable or a strap.
13. (New) The airbag construction of claim 11, wherein the weakened zone is defined by an element selected from the group consisting of a tear seam, a point-by-point perforation line, slots or grooves.
14. (New) The airbag construction as claimed in claim 11, wherein the flap and the connecting element are part of a flap mechanism, wherein the connecting element is rotatably fixed to the module by a hinge point.

15. (New) The airbag construction as in claim 11, further comprising an internal paneling which includes a covering layer and serving as a boundary to the passenger compartment and formed as a film or plastic support, and a support layer having an optional foam layer situated between the covering layer and support.
16. (New) The airbag construction as claimed in claim 12, wherein the retaining device is fixedly connected to the support layer.
17. (New) The airbag construction of claim 13, wherein the connecting element is made from elastic material.
18. (New) The airbag construction as claimed in claim 11, wherein the connecting element 13 contains a fabric structure.
19. (New) The airbag construction as claimed in claim 11, wherein the connecting element 13 is designed as a stiff lever.
20. (New) The airbag construction as claimed in claim 11, wherein the flap 8 retains the airbag in its folded up position.
21. (New) The airbag construction as claimed in claim 11, wherein the connecting element 13 is fixed on the module by a rotary joint.
22. (New) The airbag construction as claimed in claim 21, wherein a width of the flap from a rotary joint as far as a center of the flap corresponds approximately to a distance of the rotary joint from the vehicle interior paneling.